

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF WELLS.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the
Year 1913.

STREET, SOMERSET,
FEBRUARY 28th, 1914.

To the Rural District Council of Wells

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ended December 31st, 1913.

Area. 58,045 Acres.

Population. Census 1911—10,635. Estimated to the middle of 1913 at 10,609.

Geology. Dolomitic conglomerate at Chewton Mendip and Westbury; mountain limestone at Priddy; red marl at Dinder, North Wootton and Rodney Stoke: red marl and river gravel at Wookey; lower lias at West Pennard, Baltonsborough, Butleigh and Walton; alluvium and peat at Glastonbury Moor.

Birth Rate. 221 Births (106 males, 115 females) were registered in the district, giving a birth-rate of 20.8 per 1000 per annum.

Of the births 7 were illegitimate, 2 males and 5 females.

Three births of *residents* occurred *outside* the district, the *corrected* birthrate there-fore is 21.1 per 1000 per annum.

Death Rate. 211 Deaths (87 males, 124 females) were registered in the district, giving a death rate of 19.7 per 1000 per annum.

88 Deaths of non-residents were registered in the district, and 21 deaths of residents were registered *outside* the district.

The *nett death-rate* at all ages belonging to the district is therefore 13.5 per 1000 per annum, giving a *corrected death-rate* for age and sex distribution of 11.16450.

Zymotic Death Rate. The Zymotic death rate is 0.47, 5 deaths from zymotic disease being registered.

Infant Mortality. The Infant mortality per 1000 *nett* births is 93.7; 21 *nett* deaths under one year being registered.

FOR THE YEAR 1912.

Birth rate per 1000 living	...	...	...	17.8
Death rate (corrected)	...	...	..	10.26
Infant mortality per 1000 births	...	...	...	52.6
Zymotic death rate	...	...	...	0.47

AGES TABLE OF DEATHS OF RESIDENTS (NETT).

Under 1 year there were 21 deaths.

1 and under 2	„	„	„	5	„
2	„	5	„	„	was 1 death.
5	„	15	„	„	were 5 deaths
15	„	25	„	„	4
25	„	45	„	„	12
45	„	65	„	„	30
65 and upwards	„	„	„	66	„

CAUSES OF DEATH OF RESIDENTS,

whether occurring within or without the district, during the year 1913.

Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	1
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	2
Diphtheria	...	...	...	1
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	...	...	...	3
Tuberculous meningitis	...	...	...	2
Other tuberculous diseases	...	...	...	2
Cancer, malignant disease	...	...	...	20
Organic Heart Disease	...	...	...	24
Bronchitis	...	...	...	10
Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	12
Other diseases of respiratory organs	...	...	...	1
Diarrhoea and Enteritis	...	...	...	3
Nephritis and Bright's Disease	...	...	...	3
Congenital Debility and Malformation, including				
Premature Birth	...	...	...	11
Violent Death (excluding suicide)	...	...	...	1
Suicide	...	...	...	1
Other defined diseases...	...	...	...	37
Diseases ill defined or unknown	...	...	...	10

Water Supply.

My report *re* the Water Supply for the District is practically the same as for the year 1912. The districts of Butleigh, Chewton Mendip, Dinder, Priddy, Rodney Stoke, Godney, part of Polsham, West Pennard, Wookey Hole, Baltonsborough, Horrington and Sharpham, have an ample supply of good water; the Glastonbury, Street and Shepton Mallet supplies contributing respectively their portion to some of these villages.

Negotiations are still in progress relative to the projected supply for North Wootton.

Samples of water from the Parish pump at Easton have again been analysed at the County Council's Laboratory and reported as unfit for dietetic use. The matter is now under the consideration of the R D. Council, and negotiations are in progress for the supply of water to this District.

Meare and Westhay. Walton. Local Government Board enquiries have been held during the year at Meare and Walton *re* the projected water supplies for these districts. Owing to the dry summers of 1911 and 1913, and the question of a sufficiency of supply—the matter is still *sub judice*.

As the Street U.D. Council have now a good supplementary supply of water, it is to be hoped negotiations may be renewed and a supply arranged for each of these districts at no distant date.

Fourteen samples of drinking water have been sent to the County Council's Laboratory for analysis, and one to the Public Analyst during the year.

Sewerage and Drainage.

There is no general system of drainage in the district, nor regular system for the disposal of excrement, the greater part of the latter being placed on the land.

At Chewton Mendip, Draycott and Rodney Stoke, Meare, West Pennard, Walton, Dinder and Wookey, there are sewers with house drains, discharging either into the river, or on the moor, or into the ditches, or on to the land, as they are situated respectively. Priddy, Henton, Easton, Westbury-sub-Mendip and Horrington, have no drains. The Inspector of No. 1 District reports 2 new drains and 1 new pipe-sewer laid, and the Inspector of No. 2 District reports "7 new drains laid to abate nuisances," and "sewer extension at Meare."

Privies with cesspits are in common use in the district, and are often a source of danger. Some 38 defective privies have been dealt with during the year, many of them being converted into earth closets.

There is no general system of scavenging in the district, the house refuse being removed by the occupiers.

These Works have been inspected during the year, and appear to be working satisfactorily.

Twenty-nine cases of notifiable disease (excluding tuberculosis) have been notified during the year, against twelve (12) in 1912.

Two cases of Diphtheria—1 at Chewton Mendip, 1 at Meare.

One case of Erysipelas at the Somerset and Bath County Asylum.

Twenty-three cases of Scarlet Fever—2 in the Wells Out St. Cuthbert district, 9 from Westbury-sub-Mendip, 4 from Walton, and 8 from West Pennard.

Three cases of Enteric Fever—1 from North Wootton, 1 from Meare, and 1 from the Somerset and Bath County Asylum.

Forty-one (41) cases of Tuberculosis have been reported during the year—17 from the Wells Out St. Cuthbert district, 3 from Rodney Stoke, 5 from Wookey, 2 from Godney, 3 from Walton, 2 from Butleigh, 1 from Baltonsborough, and 8 from the County Asylum at Wells.

The necessary proceedings in the case of notifiable disease have been carried out by the Inspectors of Nuisances and myself.

With the exception of a Private Sanatorium in the district, no hospital accommodation is provided for tuberculosis patients (apart from the Workhouse).

I understand the County Council have decided to erect the County Sanatorium within the R.D. of Wells.

Attendance is made weekly by the County Tuberculosis Medical Officer at Glastonbury, and a considerable number of patients from this district have taken advantage of this Institution, some of whom have been sent to Sanatoria upon the Medical Officer's recommendation.

During the year cases of Scarlet Fever have been reported to me and excluded from attendance at school from Wookey Hole, West Pennard, Dinder, Westbury-sub-Mendip, and Walton; Measles from Baltonsborough, West Pennard, Butleigh, and the Wells Out St. Cuthbert districts; Whooping Cough from Coxley and Wells St. Thomas' Schools; Mumps from West Pennard and Chewton Mendip; Impetigo from West Pennard; Chicken Pox from Baltonsborough; and German Measles from Draycott.

Owing to the prevalence of Scarlet Fever at Westbury-sub-Mendip the school was closed by the County Medical Officer of Health for a short period.

The inspection of the children attending the various public schools in the district is carried out by the Medical Inspectors and Dentists appointed by the County Council.

I am of opinion that the sanitary conditions of the schools and their water supply are satisfactory.

In conjunction with the Inspectors of Nuisances I have visited the various schools and districts upon the notification of disease, and given the necessary instructions. I also notify the County Medical Officer of Health weekly, of the names of the children and the schools from which I have excluded them. I also report weekly to the County Medical Officer of Health the names and addresses of all cases of tuberculosis notified to me. These are visited by the County Tuberculosis Health Visitor and also the Inspector of Nuisances for the district. The sanitary condition of the premises from which the cases are notified, being enquired into, and if necessary amended.

In conjunction with the Inspectors of Nuisances I have made periodical inspections in various parts of the district during the year. Several cases of overcrowding have been dealt with.

The R.D. Council have had under consideration during the year, the erection of several cottages at Meare for the working classes. A Local Government Board enquiry is to be held shortly to enquire into the proposal.

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING ACT, 1909.

During the year inspections have been made under this Act by the Inspectors of Nuisances—Messrs. E. H. Padfield and P. Williams—and myself, of the Parishes of Baltonsborough, Butleigh, Rodney Stoke and Westbury-sub-Mendip—on which inspections the following is the report for 1913—together with the required information for 1912.

1.	Sanitary District	...	...	Rural District of Wells.	
2.	New houses erected during 1913	...	5.		
3.	Number of houses inspected during 1913 under the Housing Act, 1909	630.			
4.	Results of inspections of the fresh houses inspected during 1913, classified as follows :—				
(a)	Number reported as unfit for habitation	...	3.		
(b)	Number defective, but with defects not sufficient to report as unfit for habitation	...	243.		
(c)	Number without recorded sanitary defects	...	384		
5.	Action taken and results in regard to houses reported as unfit during 1912 and 1913, as follows :—				
				For houses reported during	
				1912	1913
	Number so reported	...	15	3	
	Closing order made	...	11	2	
				One voluntarily closed.	
	Made fit without a closing order	...	4		
	Still unfit but no closing order made	...	Nil	Nil.	
	Demolished	...	Nil	Nil.	
	Put in repair after closing order	...	4	Nil.	
	Still closed at end of 1913	...	1	2	
				4 houses closed in 1911 are now done up and re-opened.	
6.	Action taken with regard to defective houses but not sufficient to report as unfit, as follows :—				
				In houses first examined during	
				1912	1913
	Number so examined	...	186	243	
	Number with the defects remedied by the end of 1913	...	76	206	
	Number still defective at the end of 1913	...	6	121	
	Number not yet visited to ascertain if defects are remedied	...	Nil.	Nil.	
7.	Cases of overcrowding dealt with during the year	...	5.		
8.	Parishes in which there is evidence of shortage of houses, and steps taken to remedy	...			

Meare, Walton, West Pennard, North Wootton. There are a few void houses in Godney, Baltonsborough

Meare, Walton, West Pennard, North Wootton. There are a few void houses in Godney, Baltonsborough and Butleigh, but a few better class houses for working men would be a boon.

Steps are being taken by the R.D.C. to erect new houses at Meare. A Local Government Board enquiry is shortly to be held.

Supervision is exercised over the erection of new houses in the district. A certificate of occupation being granted by the Rural District Council only on a satisfactory report from the Inspectors.

Two Local Government Board enquiries have been held in the district during the year with regard to the projected Meare and Walton Water Supplies.

The Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890 has not been adopted in this district.

The Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907 has not been adopted in this district.

The Infectious Diseases Prevention Act 1890 *has* been adopted in this district.

The Notification of Births Act 1907 has not been adopted in this district.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum has not been notifiable in this district. The Local Government Board in a circular dated February 5th, 1914, however state that this disease will be compulsory notifiable from April 1st, 1914. This being so, the Rural District Council should enter into arrangements *re* the provision of suitable nurses to look after the cases notified.

Isolation Hospital

None. Two cottages at Worminster are still retained by the Rural District Council for the isolation of Small Pox should any case arise. The inaccessibility of the place, however, precludes their use for general isolation purposes.

Disinfection Means.

Fumigation by Sulphur Dioxide or Formalin. Disinfectants, when necessary, are supplied by the Rural District Council gratuitously. Premises from which infectious diseases are notified are afterwards disinfected by the Inspectors of Nuisances.

I would again draw your attention to the necessity of providing a suitable spraying apparatus for the disinfection of rooms—also a disinfecting apparatus for clothing, bedding, &c., &c., the present method of disinfection being, in my opinion, totally inadequate.

**Dairies—
Cowsheds and
Milkshops.**

A Register of Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops, under the Order of 1885, is kept.

There are now 341 persons registered in this District under the Order.

Inspections of the Dairies, Cowsheds, &c., have been made by the Inspectors during the year.

The Inspector of No. 1 District reports “that most of them are in a fairly clean and satisfactory state, and several of them have been improved during the year by having the floors levelled and drains repaired.”

The Inspector of No. 2 District reports that “many of the cowsheds are still of a very poor description, and better attention to their general cleanliness is desirable. Bye Laws regulations should require dung-heaps to be kept at a reasonable distance from the cowsheds.”

“Two liquid manure tanks provided to abate nuisances on farm premises at West Pennard.”

In many instances the cows are kept and milked in the fields at all times, and are housed in the sheds only for a very short period during the winter months.

The dairy produce of the district is considerable. The Council's regulations contain directions for securing the cleanliness of milk stores, milk shops, and milk vessels used for containing milk for sale.

Slaughter Houses (12), and Bakehouses (9), inspected, and are generally in a satisfactory condition.

The Public Schools in the district are visited, and their sanitary condition, water supply, &c., kept under observation.

No Bye Laws are in force in the district. The adoption of suitable ones is urgently required.

No case of Bovine Tuberculosis has been notified during the year, and no case of unsound food or diseased meat has been brought to my notice.

One case of anthrax was notified by the police, the necessary proceedings being carried out by them.

Inspections are made of the various factories, workshops, and home workers' premises by the Inspectors or myself, and their sanitation, ventilation, means of escape in case of fire, and the provision of suitable sanitary conveniences attended to.

Factory and Work-
shops Act, 1901.

Factories	..	16	Workshops and Workplaces	129
Bakehouses	...	9	Outworkers	... .. 20

I append tables of statistics as required by the Local Government Board, together with the Reports of the Inspectors of Nuisances, to whose co-operation I am again greatly indebted.

I have the honour to be,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE W. EGLINTON.

Reports and Summary of Inspectors of Nuisances.

No. 1 DISTRICT.

The following is a summary of the cases reported by me to the Council, and dealt with by order, during the year ended 31st December, 1913 :—

	No. of cases
Dwelling houses unfit for human habitation—houses done up or closed	7
Infected dwellings—occupiers served with notices as to isolation of patients, and disinfection, disinfectants supplied (including 17 cases of Tuberculosis)	26
Dwellings and clothing disinfected as directed by the Medical Officer of Health, including bungalows and shelters used for tuberculous cases	15
Public School premises disinfected	1
New dwelling houses erected for which certificates of occupation, under the Public Health Water Act have been granted by the Council	5
Dilapidated and dangerous buildings repaired	8
Dilapidated and dangerous privy repaired	1
Nuisances arising from foul and choked drains, foul accumulations	5
Animals kept in such a state as to be a nuisance	1
New drains laid	2
New pipe sewer laid	1
Slaughter houses (8) and public school premises (11) inspected, no bye-laws in force	19
Samples of drinking water sent to the County Laboratory	14
Sample of water sent to a Public Analyst	1
Wells cleansed	2
Wells closed, houses now supplied from public supplies	3
New well sunk	1
Formal notices served by the Inspector	35

There has been, as usual, a number of cases of Measles, Whooping Cough, &c., during the year. As directed by the Medical Officer of Health, I have visited the dwellings in many cases, and given instructions *re* keeping the children away from school, disinfection, &c.

Factory and Workshops Act, 1901.

There are now registered in the District 11 Factories, 24 Workshops, 58 Workplaces, 5 Bake-houses, 5 Outworkers—total 103.

These have all been inspected, at least once during the year, and are generally in a fairly clean and satisfactory condition.

Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order, 1885.

There are now 197 persons registered under this order, and all the premises have been kept under inspection, and most of them are in a fairly clean and satisfactory state, and several of them have been improved during the year by having the floors levelled and drains repaired.

Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909.

During the year I have, in conjunction with the Medical Officer of Health, inspected all the dwelling houses for the purposes of Section 17 of the Act, in the Parishes of Rodney Stoke and Westbury, and reported thereon to the Council.

The following is a summary of the cases reported to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

PARISH OF RODNEY STOKE.

Number of houses inspected	172
Number of houses without recorded defects	103
Number of houses with recorded defects	69
Number of houses with defects remedied	60
Number of houses with defects not yet remedied	9

PARISH OF WESTBURY.

Number of houses inspected	137
Number of houses unfit for habitation—one closing order issued, two voluntarily closed	3
Number of houses without recorded defects	71

Number of houses with recorded defects ...	...	...	...	...	66
Number of houses with defects remedied	...	...	...	...	49
Number of houses with defects not yet remedied	...	...	...	...	17

PARISH OF WOOKEY.

INSPECTIONS MADE IN 1912.

Number of houses inspected ...	...	...	...	...	218
Number of houses still defective 1st January, 1913	...	...	...	...	29
Number of houses with defects remedied in 1913	...	...	...	...	23
Number of houses with defects not yet remedied	...	...	...	...	6

One closing order issued 1912. House done up, and closing order determined July 1913.

Other house still closed.

EASTWATER TYTHING OF THE PARISH OF ST. CUTHBERT OUT.

Four houses, Minery Cottages, Wells Road, Priddy, thoroughly repaired. Closing orders determined April, 1913.

PHILIP WILLIAMS,

Inspector No. 1 District.

No. 2 DISTRICT.

Inspector of Nuisances Report for year ended December 31st, 1913 :—

	No. of Cases			
Infectious Disease : Occupiers of dwellings served with notices as to isolation of patients and disinfection of dwellings (disinfectants supplied)	13
Disinfections : Dwellings, &c., disinfected	13
„ Pulmonary Tuberculosis, cases visited and disinfected	6
Overcrowding : Number of cases dealt with	2
New Dwellings : Certificates for occupation (nil).				
Animals : Pigs so kept as to be a nuisance	1
Sewers : Sewer extension at Meare	1
Drains : New drains laid to abate nuisances	7
Privies : Defective privies dealt with, the majority of cases being conversions into dry earth closets	37
Slaughter Houses : Inspected (1 new floor laid)	4
Bakehouses : Inspected, all in fair order	4
Offices of Public Schools : Inspected, all in fair order	10
Notices served and letters written by Inspector	234

Factory and Workshops Act, 1901.

The number of Factories registered is 5 ; Workshops and Workplaces, 47 ; Home Workers, no lists received.

These are kept under observation, and are generally in a satisfactory sanitary condition.

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order, 1885.

The number of persons now registered is 144, all of whom are cow-keepers. Many of the cowsheds are still of a very poor description, and better attention to their general cleanliness is desirable.

Bye Laws regulations should require dung-heaps to be kept at a reasonable distance from the cowsheds.

Bovine Anthrax : One case notified. Premises inspected and the case found to have been satisfactorily dealt with by the Police Authority.

Bovine Tuberculosis : No case notified.

Two liquid manure tanks provided to abate nuisances on farm premises at West Pennard.

Housing and Town Planning Act Inspections.

During the year the Parishes of Baltonsborough and Butleigh have been inspected, the total number of dwellings in both parishes being 322.

The whole of the 979 dwellings in the eight parishes comprising the No 2 district have now been inspected.

The following is a table of particulars of inspections :—

No. 2 DISTRICT.
Table of Particulars of Housing Inspections for years 1911—12—13.

Date of Inspections.	Parish.	No. of houses inspected.	Without recorded defects.	With recorded minor defects.	Minor defects remedied.	Minor defects not remedied.	Unfit for habitation.	Closed or rendered "fit."	Closing Order served, still occupied.	Houses with only 1 bedroom.	Houses with 2 bedrooms.	Houses with 3 or more bedrooms.	Population 1911	Average No. of inmates in houses.	Void houses, available for occupation.
Year 1911	Meare ...	226	126	90	84	6	10	6	4	16	95	115	969	4·3	Nil.
" "	Godney ...	68	44	21	18	3	3	2	1	6	24	38	299	4·4	4—very poor ones.
" "	Walton ...	98	48	48	42	6	2	1	1	5	40	53	462	4·8	1—a mile from Village.
" 1912	Sharpham ...	18	14	4	3	1	...	...	...	..	7	11	69	3·8	Nil.
" "	North Wootton ...	67	43	21	19	2	3	1	2	4	16	47	262	4·0	Nil.
" "	West Pennard ...	180	115	59	56	3	6	2	4	6	61	113	639	3·5	2 { very poor ones and a mile from Village.
" 1913	Baltonsborough ...	147	93	53	20	33	1	...	1	3	50	94	509	3·4	{ Rental of 3 too high for working men, the others very poor ones.
" "	Butleigh ...	175	119	56	...	*56	...	...	...	6	69	100	636	3·6	9—fair cottages.
		979	602	352	242	110	25	12	13	46	362	571	3845	3·975	23

* Inspections just completed—Notices not yet served.

NOTE.—All notices, except "Closing Orders" have been served under the provisions of the Public Health Acts applicable to each particular case.

Attention has been given to the prevention of waste and pollution of the Council's water supplies.

Two Local Government enquiries attended *re* water supplies for Meare and Walton.

Attended Rural District Council Housing Committee at Meare.

EDWIN H. PADFIELD,

Inspector, District No. 2.

Rural District Council of Wells.

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FOR THE YEAR 1913.

Wells:

Dowman Woodhams, Printer, 5, High Street.